

pride of his family and headed to Iraq with their full support. His mother recounted to a local newspaper, "[His co-workers] were crazy about him. Everyone was, you couldn't not fall in love with him."

Jonathan was killed while serving his country in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was a member of the 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division based at Fort Campbell, KY. This brave young soldier leaves behind his mother and stepfather, Peggy Jo and Jeff Hammond; his father and stepmother, Randy and Jackie Pfender; a 26-year-old brother; a 1-year-old half brother; stepsiblings and other relatives.

Today, I join Jonathan's family and friends in mourning his death. While we struggle to bear our sorrow over this loss, we can also take pride in the example he set, bravely fighting to make the world a safer place. It is his courage and strength of character that people will remember when they think of Jonathan, a memory that will burn brightly during these continuing days of conflict and grief.

Jonathan was known for his dedication to his family and his love of country. Today and always, Jonathan will be remembered by family members, friends and fellow Hoosiers as a true American hero and we honor the sacrifice he made while dutifully serving his country.

As I search for words to do justice in honoring Jonathan's sacrifice, I am reminded of President Lincoln's remarks as he addressed the families of the fallen soldiers in Gettysburg: "We cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." This statement is just as true today as it was nearly 150 years ago, as I am certain that the impact of Jonathan's actions will live on far longer than any record of these words.

It is my sad duty to enter the name of Jonathan Pfender in the official record of the United States Senate for his service to this country and for his profound commitment to freedom, democracy and peace. When I think about this just cause in which we are engaged, and the unfortunate pain that comes with the loss of our heroes, I hope that families like Jonathan's can find comfort in the words of the prophet Isaiah who said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."

May God grant strength and peace to those who mourn, and may God be with all of you, as I know He is with Jonathan.●

#### THE CONFIRMATION OF GREG VAN TATENHOVE

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I am so happy the U.S. Senate confirmed

Greg Van Tatenhove to sit on the Federal judicial bench.

By sending his nomination to the U.S. Senate, President Bush has presented the American people with a top-notch candidate for our Federal bench in the Eastern District of Kentucky.

Greg has great experience and strong qualifications. Although he is not originally from Kentucky, he made a smart decision by making a permanent move to our Commonwealth. Greg also received a great education from both Kentucky's Asbury College and the University of Kentucky College of Law. I am proud to call Greg a fellow Kentuckian.

Greg has worked two stints for members of Kentucky's Federal congressional delegation Senator MCCONNELL and Representative RON LEWIS. Greg also served as a judicial law clerk in U.S. District Court, and he served in the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Division as a trial attorney. Over the last 4 years Greg has served admirably as a U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

His time on Capitol Hill, in the Department of Justice, and within our judicial system has given Greg a wealth of knowledge and experience which can only make him a better judge. Clearly, Greg possesses the wisdom, temperament, and character to be a Federal judge. President George W. Bush and the U.S. Senate have done well working together to ensure Greg's nomination and confirmation for service as a Federal judge.

I am proud to support Greg's elevation for this Federal judgeship, and I am thankful to Chairman SPECTER and Ranking Member LEAHY, too, for their leadership on the U.S. Senate's Judiciary Committee to ensure the swift approval of Greg's confirmation. The United States and Kentucky are better off with Greg serving their citizens.●

#### OREGON'S DEATH WITH DIGNITY ACT

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, consistent with my practice of announcing publicly my intent to object to unanimous consent requests, I am asking to have printed in the RECORD a letter to Senator REID dated January 18, 2006. It explains that I will use every legislative and procedural tool at my disposal as a U.S. Senator to block any attempt to affect in any way Oregon's Death With Dignity Act, which the Supreme Court upheld yesterday.

The letter follows.

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, January 18, 2006.

Hon. HARRY REID,  
Minority Leader,  
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADER REID: I am writing to inform you of my intent to object to any unanimous consent request to consider any measure or matter that might affect end of life care generally and Oregon's Death With Dignity Act in particular.

As you know, the U.S. Supreme Court yesterday upheld Oregon's unique Death with

Dignity Act, and I intend to use every legislative and procedural tool at my disposal as a United States Senator to block any attempt to overturn, invalidate or otherwise affect Oregon's law in any way.

Consistent with my practice of publicly announcing my intent to place a "hold" on a measure or matter, I will ask that this letter be printed in the Congressional Record. If your staff has any questions, please feel free to contact my Legislative and Policy Director, Carole Grunberg, or my Senior Health Policy Advisor, Stephanie Kennan at 224-5244.

Sincerely,

RON WYDEN,  
U.S. Senator.●

#### BILL O'NEILL

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I wish today to acknowledge the good work of Bill O'Neill, a document checker at the Burlington International Airport in Vermont.

I routinely fly between Burlington and Washington, and it is always a pleasure to see Bill at the ID checking stand. He and I have been friends for decades.

I was pleased to see an article about Bill in the December 27, 2005, Burlington Free Press. I ask that a copy of the article be printed in the RECORD. I know that once they read it, my colleagues will look forward to traveling through the Burlington airport as much as I do.

The article follows.

[From the Burlington Free Press, Dec. 27, 2005]

SECURITY WITH A SMILE, AIRPORT SCREENER  
BILL O'NEILL HELPS TAKE STRESS OUT OF  
FLYING

(By Emily Guziak)

SOUTH BURLINGTON.—Bill O'Neill's job does not require that he fawn over babies.

Nor does it require that he greet everyone he meets by name with a heartfelt good morning, put their various airline receipts in order, hold cups of coffee, or provide tips on how to switch planes at the next destination.

O'Neill, a document checker for PrimeFlight Aviation Services at Burlington International Airport, is simply required to check departing passengers' identification, boarding passes and number and size of carry-on items.

For frequent travelers, the document checker is often the nameless, faceless, overly efficient person hurrying passengers into inevitable security lines. For bleary-eyed, often-harried early morning travelers in Burlington, O'Neill's station at Gate One is an oasis in the rush of processing passengers through ticket check-in and Transportation Security Administration security clearance.

"He's brilliant; he's great," said business traveler J.P. Tardy, of Charlotte, N.C., queuing up in the security line for United Airline's 7:48 a.m. flight to Chicago on a recent weekday morning. "He absolutely makes this airport."

O'Neill, 72, is the document checker for United Airlines and US Airways passengers, from 4:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. His upbeat, helpful manner never wavers, those working around him say.

"He's very people-oriented; people like him," said Mark Salisbury, supervisor, transportation security officer, for TSA at Burlington International Airport. Salisbury supervises the security checkpoint near

O'Neill's station. "He's worked in the business for a long time, so I'm sure he's seen it all. He's just a very nice guy. And he's very helpful, especially for older folks."

"You feel like you're being greeted, rather than just being moved into the line by a security person," said Deedee O'Brien of Shelburne, en route to Los Angeles on the Chicago flight. "I think he was here when we traveled six months ago. He's such a nice person."

O'Neill's performance should be catching the attention of all those marketing gurus out there trying to sell the quintessential New England hometown atmosphere. At 6:30 a.m., as passengers went through O'Neill's station, the mood of some travelers changed from tense to relaxed.

"He provides the best service I've ever had," said Dan Grant, of Seattle, a weekly business traveler. "If you fly a lot and go through the larger airports, you can get kind of beaten down. You're lucky if you can get a word out of people in his job."

He is in command at his post. "You can put that ID away; you won't need it anymore today and your boarding pass to Philly is right here," O'Neill quietly and calmly told one of the people in the steady stream of departing passengers. "I thank you, and you have a good day."

"He takes the hassle out of what travel has become," said Andy Tomlinson of South Burlington, on her way "to go home and do the Santa thing" with family in California. "He's great."

A United Airlines employee for 32 years, O'Neill retired in 1998 and returned to work in March for extra income. He is employed by PrimeFlight Aviation of Nashville, Tenn. The company has 4,000 employees in 50 airports in the United States providing a variety of services. In Burlington, United Airlines and US Airways contract with PrimeFlight to provide five document checkers.

O'Neill also has the task of informing passengers when they have been randomly selected by the airlines for an additional search, and must proceed to the line to their right, rather than left. "People can resent it, especially if they're in a hurry," O'Neill said.

"I tell them, I fly free because I have a golden pass, and every time I fly the computer randomly selects me because it reads my ticket as cash, one-way and automatically makes me a selectee. I tell them their special search is no different than mine and it often makes them feel better."

"He is just fantastic," said Thane Butt, of Shelburne, flying to Chicago with her husband, Peter. Butt jokingly asked the bushy-eyed O'Neill if he was Andy Rooney.

"I've been asked that a few times," said the unflappable O'Neill.

"He makes you feel like you're not just another person," said Dr. Alan Segal of South Burlington. "And he's got one of those faces; he looks like everyone's grandfather."●

#### PILOT KNOB ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, EAGAN, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Pilot Knob Elementary School in Eagan, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Pilot Knob Elementary School, which serves a diverse population of 375 children in kindergarten through grade four, is truly a model of educational success. The school boasts a 96 percent

attendance rate; test scores are well above average for most students; and many of the teachers are leaders in their fields. Pilot Knob Elementary has also devised an innovative approach to address bullying in school. Through its "Take Time To Be Kind" program, nine fourth graders donate their recess time to spread goodwill in the hallways, creating a safe and kind learning environment for all students.

In addition to its students, Pilot Knob Elementary is also committed to its community. Recently, students raised \$1,700 for UNICEF, to help victims of the tsunami in South Asia, and a similarly successful fundraising effort benefited a local shelter for homeless families. The school regularly opens its doors to the citizens of Eagan, welcoming not only staff and students but also parents, siblings, and neighbors to special school activities. Pilot Knob hosts a wide range of community events: from musical concerts to art and book fairs, to science experiment demonstrations, to ice cream socials.

Much of the credit for Pilot Knob's success belongs to its principal, Byron Schwab, who was Minnesota's Principal of the Year in 2001. Principal Schwab and the dedicated faculty at Pilot Knob Elementary understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also create a nurturing environment, where students learn the importance of respecting one another and the value of their community. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Pilot Knob Elementary should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Pilot Knob Elementary School in Eagan for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION PRESENTED TO EDINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, EDINA, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I wish to also honor the Edina Public School District, serving Edina, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional achievements in educating children.

The Edina Public School District is committed to instilling in its students not only knowledge, but also a sense of self-worth, creativity, and strong ethical values. To achieve these goals, Edina Public Schools offer a wide array of educational opportunities tailored to the diverse needs of its students. Students with limited English proficiency benefit from an exceptionally fine English as a Second Language program; more advanced learners are given new challenges through the district's Gifted Education Program; and students with special needs receive additional help through an outstanding Special Education program.

Edina Public Schools also challenge students outside of the classroom. The

district's top-notch athletic programs and team sports help students learn the value of both cooperation and competition. Student musicians, actors, and artists benefit from highly acclaimed musical, theatrical, and artistic cocurricular programs. Over 90 percent of Edina Public Schools' student body participate in cocurricular activities.

The Edina Public School District recognizes that it must constantly adapt and improve its curricula to meet the ever-changing needs of its students. The district's superintendent, Dr. Kenneth Dragseth, and the dedicated faculty are always willing to incorporate new techniques and approaches to teaching. As a result, 95 percent of Edina High School's graduates who attend college report being well prepared for their college experience.

All of the faculty, staff, and students at Edina Public Schools should be very proud of their accomplishments. I congratulate the Edina Public School District for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

#### COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER OF AUSTIN, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I further wish to honor the Community Learning Center in Austin, MN, which has earned an Award for Excellence in Education, for its outstanding commitment to lifelong learning. The Community Learning Center provides educational opportunities for students of all ages and skill levels—from infants to senior citizens.

The Community Learning Center offers programs tailored to every type of learner, including, early childhood family education for parents and their young children; early childhood special education for students with special needs; adult basic education and family literacy for adults with limited reading and English skills; and community education, which offers ongoing education for all community members.

The Community Learning Center is committed not only to lifelong learning but also to the empowerment and better quality of life that education makes possible. The center's learning programs help students to break the cycle of poverty, imparting skills that expand their opportunities for employment and that illuminate the value of education for children. The center is a model of quality education and community outreach and has enriched the lives of thousands of students. All of the center's faculty, staff, and students should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Community Learning Center in Austin for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●